(c) whether any norms have been issued by the Central Electricity Regulatory Authority (CERA) to reimburse service tax to power transmission firms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) As per the information provided by Ministry of Finance, the issue regarding levy of service tax on power transmission is pending decision before the Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (CESTAT). Based on the stay order of the CESTAT in the matter of Madhya Pradesh Power Transmission Company Limited Versus Commissioner of Central Excise, Bhopal [(reported in 2008) 15 Service Tax Today 222 (New Delhi - CESTAT)] protective show cause notices have been issued to power transmission companies demanding service tax.

(c) and (d) Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL) through Petition No.62/2009 filed with Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) has sought permission to bill and recover from the respondents the service tax for the period 01.05.2006 to 30.09.2008, together with education cess, interest, penalty, if any, chargeable in terms of Section 64 of the Finance Act, 1994. The CERC has adjourned the matter sine die with liberty to the petitioner to approach the CERC if so required, after a decision of the Tax authorities.

Coal supply to power stations

3504. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is big gap between supply and requirement of Coal-based utility Thermal Power Stations for 2009 and 2010; and

(b) if so, how the target would be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The coal requirement for meeting the generation target and building coal stock upto normative level for the year 2009-10 was assessed as 404 Million Tonne (MT) and the coal requirement for the year 2010-11 has been estimated as 444 Million Tonne. Against this requirement, the indigenous coal availability is expected to be 363 during the year 2009-10 and 388 Million Tonne during 2010-11, leaving a shortfall of 41 Million Tonne and 56 Million Tonne in the respective year. To bridge the gap, power utilities have been advised to import 28.7 Million Tonne (equivalent to 41 MT of domestic coal because of higher calorific value of imported coal) during 2009-10. It is also proposed to import coal to bridge the gap between its requirement and availability from domestic sources during the year 2010-11.

Maharatna status for NTPC

3505. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to upgrade the status of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) from Navratna to Maharatna company;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government has fixed any norms for providing such status;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when Government would give Maharatna status to NTPC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (e) The proposal for introduction of Maharatna Scheme is under consideration of the Government.

Effects of coal quality on power generation

†3506. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether power generation is getting affected due to disproportionate size and quantity of coal;

(b) if so, the places from where such coal is being supplied and the names of affected units; and

(c) the measures being adopted to maintain power generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) While, the power generation is getting affected due to inadequate availability of coal, disproportionate size of coal in general does not have a direct impact on power generation. The oversized coal, however, leads to unloading problems at power stations including chocking of grizzly and damaging the Coal Handling Plant and delays in release of railways rakes leading to demurrage charges.

(b) The power utilities have reported receipt of oversized coal in the power stations from Central Coalfields Ltd. (CCL), Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL), Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL) and Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd. (MCL). The power plants which have reported receipt of oversized coal from these coalfields are given in the Statement (see below).

(c) The measures being taken to maintain generation of electricity include:

i) monitoring of coal supply to thermal power stations of Power Utilities on daily basis.

ii) reviewing and resolving the problems of coal supply to thermal power stations on weekly basis by an Inter-Ministerial Sub-Group under the aegis of Ministry of Coal.

iii) reviewing the coal production and supply to thermal power stations in the Infrastructure Constraints Review Committee headed by Secretary (Co-ordination), Cabinet Secretariat every month.

iv) import of coal by the Power Utilities to bridge the shortfall between requirement of coal and its availability from the domestic sources.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.